What is Claimed:

1. An apparatus for use with an envelope feeding machine, wherein the feeding machine feeds envelopes in a feed direction along a feed path, the apparatus comprising:

a print head, wherein the print head is operative in response to a print signal to print on a substrate passing proximate the print head;

a frame adapted for being positioned proximate the feeding machine, the frame being adapted to be interchangeably mounted to one of a plurality of different types of feeding machines having different feed rates, wherein the print head is attached to the frame and oriented so that envelopes traveling along the feed path will pass proximate the print head thereby enabling indicia to be printed on an envelope passing proximate the print head;

a sensor positioned proximate the feed path for generating a detection signal when an envelope passes proximate the sensor; and

a controller, electrically connected to the print head, the controller adapted to generate the print signal, the controller adapted to vary print signal speed to appropriately print the indicia on envelopes fed by feeding machines having different feed rates, the controller adapted to initiate the print signal based on the detection signal.

2. The apparatus of claim 1, further comprising an encoder in communication with the controller, the encoder providing envelope speed information to the controller.

3. The apparatus of claim 2, wherein the controller controls printing speed of the print head based on the envelope speed information from the encoder.

4. The apparatus of claim 1, wherein the controller controls printing speed of the print head based on a speed setpoint received via a user interface.

5. The apparatus of claim 1, wherein the controller comprises a computer card adapted to be inserted in a computer.

6. The apparatus of claim 1, wherein the print head comprises a plurality of print heads, each print head for printing a different portion of the indicia.

7. The apparatus of claim 1, wherein the print signal enables the print head to print information based indicia program (IBIP) approved indicia and address information together with Coding Accuracy Support System (CASS) approved bar coding on the envelope.

8. The apparatus of claim 7, wherein the controller is operable cause a request for a reduced postage rate by confirming that the indicia includes CASS approved bar coding.

9. The apparatus of claim 1, further comprising a computer, electrically connected to the controller, the computer operable to generate a control signal indicating authorization of a postage amount.

10. The apparatus of claim 9, wherein the computer comprises a network communication device and the computer comprises programming for enabling the computer to receive a postage related communication via a network and for generating the control signal in response to the postage related communication.

11. The apparatus of claim 1, wherein the apparatus is operable to print postage indicia on the envelope without a local postage meter.

12. The apparatus of claim 1, further comprising a scanner disposed proximate the frame, the scanner scans the envelope subsequent to the envelope passing proximate the print head.

13. A method for retrofitting an existing mailing system, the existing mailing system comprising an existing printing portion, an existing metering portion, and an existing feeding portion that moves an envelope along a feed path, the method comprising:

removing the existing printing portion of the mailing system;

mounting a frame and a print head proximate the existing feeding portion so that the envelope traveling along the feed path will pass proximate the print head, the frame and print head being a different type from the removed existing printing portion;

mounting a sensor proximate the existing feeding portion, wherein the sensor senses that the feeding portion of the mailing system has positioned the envelope proximate the print head and provides a signal to the controller to begin printing postage amount indicia;

connecting the print head to a controller, wherein the controller is operable to generate a print signal to cause the print head to print postage amount indicia, the controller is operable to receive an indication that it is authorized to print a postage indicia, the controller is operable to cause the print head to print at various speeds; and

adjusting the controller to cause the print head to print at a similar speed as the removed existing printing portion of the mailing system.

14. The method of claim 13, further comprising mounting an encoder proximate the existing feeding portion, wherein the encoder senses the speed of the feeding portion of the mailing system and outputs a signal based on the sensed speed.

15. The method of claim 13, wherein the controller comprises a computer card and the method further comprises:

removing the existing metering portion; and

installing the controller in a computer having a network communication device, whereby the controller may receive authorization to print a postage amount indicia via the network communication device.